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### **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 1,2,5,7,9-11,13,14,16,18-21,24,26,28,29,43 and 45 are allowed over the references of record for the reasons set forth in Applicants' 3/12/08 remarks. It is noted that each independent claim has been amended to require silicon nitride dots (not films or regions) whose surface portions are higher in nitrogen concentration than central portions of said dots. It is noted that Applicants take the view that one of skill in the art would have considered excessive nitrogen in an SiN dot to be detrimental to that dot's charge-trapping ability.

2. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### ***Conclusion***

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas L Dickey whose telephone number is 571-272-1913. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, please contact the examiner's supervisor, Sue A. Purvis, at 571-272-1236. The fax phone number for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

**/Thomas L Dickey/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2826**